

RM-9242

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John Waitman

521 E Street, Salida, CO 81201

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November 20, 1998

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Mr. William Kennard, FCC:

In recent years, an unprecedented consolidation has occurred in the ownership of FM radio stations, as well as other media. This consolidation has left the average listener with a much more limited choice of programming. As long as people wish to listen to the programs that huge corporations produce there is no problem. Many of us are not satisfied with this state of affairs. Even public radio, long a bastion of alternative viewpoints and local input, is undergoing the same type of consolidation.

The Salida Radio Club is an all-volunteer group of local artists and broadcasting amateurs that are having a go at running a low-power FM radio station, "Free Range Radio for Salida". We broadcast daily using a six watt transmitter on 101.1 FM. Our signal reaches a distance of approximately five miles, which includes all of Salida and some of Poncha Springs. The population of this area is about six thousand people. The station has a diverse yet local flavor. The community support we have received is astonishing.

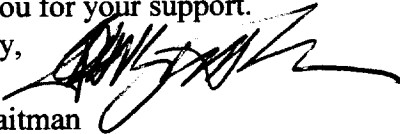
I believe that the FCC is in a position to return some local control to the airwaves by creating licensing categories that will enable and encourage small, not-for-profit groups to operate a station such as ours legitimately. Currently, the FCC does not recognize or license FM stations under 100 watts. It is my understanding that the FCC is preparing to act soon on this issue, perhaps in December. Please encourage them to legitimize small-scale, local radio. I would appreciate any support you could provide for our modest radio efforts.

We run our station based on the rules and regulations governing the operation of a small public radio station. This means that obscenity is not tolerated and community standards are upheld. We don't have a political agenda and never advertise. We are funded strictly by donation, receiving no money from grants or advertisers. We truly do it for the love of broadcasting.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

John Waitman



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